United Nations E/AC.51/2007/3

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
29 March 2007

Original: English

Committee for Programme and Coordination
Forty-seventh session
11 June-6 July 2007
Item 4 (c) of the provisional agenda*
Programme questions: evaluation

Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the triennial review of the implementation of recommendations made by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its forty-fourth session on the in-depth evaluation of the programme on public administration, finance and development

Summary

The present report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) is submitted in accordance with the decision taken by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its twenty-second session to review the implementation of its recommendations three years after taking decisions on an in-depth evaluation.

This triennial review concludes that the Division for Public Administration and Development Management in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs has taken adequate measures towards implementing the Committee's recommendations on the in-depth evaluation of the programme on public administration, finance and development. In the past three years, the Division has undertaken important steps to reduce its scope and to focus on priority themes of public administration, a process that was endorsed by the Committee of Experts on Public Administration at its fifth session in 2006. In the area of public financial management, the Division re-centred its scope on new and specific themes and introduced a programme on citizen engagement in public accountability and participatory audit.

* E/AC.51/2007/1.

07-28912 (E) 120407

Regarding collaboration within the Division, efforts have been made to enhance cooperation between branches and to strengthen linkages and synergies in the Division by increasingly organizing its work on cross-cutting themes and functions. Partnerships with United Nations entities have also been enhanced during the past three years.

The Division has been very active in collecting, evaluating and disseminating best practices in the various fields of its work. One notable example of these initiatives is the United Nations Public Service Awards, for which the Division has developed a comprehensive set of tools. The Division has also started to produce various publications on best practices in public administration.

The Division has elaborated and strengthened its web portal, the United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance (UNPAN), which has become an indispensable tool for disseminating the Division's work and knowledge. The Division has also developed an information strategy for reaching those most interested in its outputs. Further, with the Division Intranet and the development of an internal information strategy, the Division has taken steps to strengthen internal information sharing.

While OIOS notes progress in respect to the implementation of the recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Coordination, a few points continue to warrant attention. These include the support to public finance management work, especially surrounding the scope of work and the financial resources allocated to the Financing for Development Office; the internal use and updating of UNPAN; and intra-divisional cooperation to enhance linkages across branches, functions and themes.

I. Introduction

1. At its forty-fourth session, in 2004, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) on the in-depth evaluation of the programme on public administration, finance and development (E/AC.51/2004/3). In its report to the General Assembly,[1] the Committee endorsed recommendations 1 to 8 contained in the OIOS report.

2. The present report is a triennial review of those recommendations, and describes the extent to which they have been implemented by the Division for Public Administration and Development Management, the Secretariat entity responsible for implementing subprogramme 8 on Public administration, finance and development. This Division is located in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. The report does not assess overall administrative management of the Division. The Department reviewed the draft report and did not have any comments.

3. Through its public administration programme, created in 1948, the United Nations assists Member States in their efforts to strengthen, improve and reform their governance systems and administrative institutions. In recent years, the programme has evolved into a wide range of normative, analytical and operational activities. In 2003, it received additional capacity to address a broad range of public governance issues, including substantive support to national institutions in the social and economic governance areas. Capacity was also assigned to the Financing for Development Office in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, created in early 2003 as a secretariat for the International Conference on Financing for Development.

4. The following four data collection methods were used to conduct this triennial review: (a) information provided by the Division on the progress made in implementing the recommendations of the in-depth evaluation, a process monitored twice a year by OIOS since issuance of the in-depth evaluation in 2004; (b) consultations in June and July 2005 with Division staff; (c) six interviews held in November and December 2006 with staff of the Division and of the Financing for Development Office; and (d) a survey carried out in January 2007 of members of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration.[2] A draft of the report was made available for review to the Division and to the Financing for Development Office.

II. Findings

Recommendation 1
Rationalizing the scope and focus of the Division

Given its existing capacity, within the broad theme of strengthening governance systems and institutions for social development and poverty reduction, the Division for Public Administration and Development Management should identify a few critical areas where it can have an impact. This process should be based on the following criteria: (a) the

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 16* (A/59/16), paras. 400-409.

[2] The survey was conducted in January 2007. Out of 24 current members and 10 former members, a total of 8 responded.

Division's comparative advantage vis-à-vis other United Nations entities taking into account their respective mandates and substantive expertise; (b) an analysis of Member States' specific client groups that would benefit from the advisory and technical assistance services provided by the Division; and (c) a review of the relative usefulness of products and services based on existing assessments. This process should be concluded by the end of 2004 in order for these areas of focus to be reflected in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007.

5. The Division has reduced the number of critical substantive areas it focuses on into four priority themes. This began in 2003, when the Division started to reorganize itself into three new functional and administrative branches, interlinking analytical and substantive work with technical cooperation, information-sharing and networking.[3] In its fourth session in 2005, the Committee of Experts on Public Administration welcomed this structure, but underlined the need for greater cross-branch integration of public administration topics. In response to this, the Division decided to further concentrate its activities into four substantive areas, all of which are addressed by multiple branches: (a) post-conflict reconstruction of governance and public administration systems; (b) participatory governance; (c) capacity-building and promotion of professionalism and ethics in the public sector; and (d) information and communications technology for development. This was endorsed by the Committee in its fifth session in March 2006.[4] Within each of these four substantive areas, the Division additionally prioritizes "emerging issues". These include, for example, judicial and legislative administration, revenue administration, budgeting and e-governance.

6. Although the three branches focus on fewer substantive areas, the work programme of all branches occasionally addresses additional areas in order to deal with emerging issues.[5] Also, the Division continues to provide a broad variety of services, comprising advisory services, analytical research, advocacy and normative work, all interrelated with additional aspects of public administration. Committee of Experts survey respondents generally agreed that the Division had started to concentrate on fewer substantive areas. They considered participatory governance and information technology development to be the best integrated areas, while they believed that capacity-building, promotion of professionalism and ethics in the public sector, especially post-conflict management, were still somewhat less incorporated.

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[3] The three branches are: (a) the Governance and Public Administration Branch; (b) the Socio-Economic Governance and Management Branch; and (c) the Knowledge Management Branch, including the Public Administration Networking Unit.

[4] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2006, Supplement No. 24* (E/2006/44).

[5] These additional areas are: (a) Governance and Public Administration Branch: innovation in governance and public administration, post-conflict reconstruction of governance and public administration, human resources management and integrity, accountability and ethics; (b) Socio-Economic Governance and Management Branch: capacity-building of socio-economic institutions, tools, techniques and strategies for achieving the Millennium Development Goals, strengthening and mainstreaming social capital, public finance, countries in conflict, or emerging from conflict and training activities; and (c) Knowledge Management Branch and the Public Information Networking Unit: Government in Information Society, including information and communications technology in promoting knowledge-based government for development, United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance and promote the sharing of knowledge via information and communications technologies in sound public policies.

7. The Division's substantive expertise is increasingly based on its comparative advantages, especially in relation to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The Division is cooperating with UNDP, according to the general compact between the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and UNDP,[6] which recognizes the special responsibilities both entities have in development and how their roles are mutually reinforced. A more specific partnership agreement in the area of governance and public sector management[7] underlines this mutual support and efforts to eliminate duplication. Furthermore, both entities consult one another on initiatives and technical assistance activities. The current cooperation between the Division and UNDP is based on the understanding that UNDP focuses on democratic governance, including institutional aspects of governance, human rights and civil society strengthening, while the Division concentrates on aspects of the public sector, including public economics, administration and financial management matters.

8. OIOS considers this recommendation implemented. At the same time, OIOS would encourage the Division to continue its efforts to better focus its work programme.

Recommendation 2
Support to international cooperation in tax matters in the Financing for Development Office

The Department of Economic and Social Affairs should ensure that the work on international cooperation in tax matters and support to Governments in this area are given appropriate focus and support within the Financing for Development Office.

9. In early 2003, the Financing for Development Office was established as a separate office to implement a new subprogramme on financing for development. While the Office's main task is to serve as the standing secretariat for following up on the intergovernmental process for financing for development as a result of the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development, it also took over from the Division the support function for the Ad Hoc Group of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters. In its resolution 2004/69, the Economic and Social Council called for strengthening international tax cooperation and renamed the Ad Hoc Group of Experts the Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters. This change further involved a renewed organizational structure and a more important role of the Committee: to promote international tax cooperation among national tax authorities and to provide recommendations to developing and transitional countries regarding capacity-building and technical assistance.[8]

10. As a consequence, the work scope of the Financing for Development Office has been expanded beyond policy issues to include matters of technical cooperation with national tax authorities. With an additional P-5 post filled in December 2006, the Office currently assigns two Professional staff to international cooperation in tax matters. However, no transfer of additional non-post resources has been noted

[6] Valid since 1999 and further detailed in March 2002.

[7] Between UNDP/Bureau for Development Policy (formerly the Management Development and Governance Division) and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

[8] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2005, Supplement No. 25* (E/2005/45).

during the biennium 2006-2007. With respect to taxation matters, the Financing for Development Office has an expanded mandate but few resources for capacity-building activities. For example, an initiative by the Committee of Experts to organize the first training workshop for tax officers of developing countries, to be hosted by the Government of Viet Nam, could not be organized in 2006 owing to budgetary constraints.

11. OIOS considers this recommendation implemented. However, OIOS suggests that the Department of Economic and Social Affairs consider further enhancing the resources provided for support to the Ad Hoc Group of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters (see also recommendation 3).

Recommendation 3
Support to public finance management work in the Division

The Division should allocate adequate resources to work in public finance management to allow for a more effective delivery of analytical and operational outputs in that area.

12. As noted in paragraph 5, the Division has undertaken efforts to better focus its work in the area of public financial management. While the Division's support in public expenditure management before the creation of the Financing for Development Office comprised both audit and tax administration, the Division now concentrates only on: (a) participatory public finance, including new modalities for the participation of citizens in public finance processes, e.g., participatory budgeting, people-budgeting and pro-poor-budgeting; and (b) auditing, including ethics and social audits.

13. The Division recently introduced a programme on citizen engagement in public accountability and participatory audit and sponsored an expert group meeting on "Auditing for Social Change" in May 2005.[9] Furthermore, in partnership with the International Budget Project, the Division organized a dialogue for citizen engagement in monitoring public accountability in Manila in November 2006. These initiatives marked the first time that the United Nations has provided a forum in which civil society organizations involved in public accountability held bilateral discussions with Government audit officials and supreme audit institutions.

14. All issues related to international taxation and revenue have been transferred to the Financing for Development Office. In this regard, the scope of the Division on public financial management matters has narrowed. However, OIOS has two concerns regarding resources for public financial management issues. First, as new topics arise, OIOS questions whether two Professional staff within the Socio-Economic Governance and Management Branch plus one audit expert in the Governance and Public Administration Branch will be sufficient to address the topics. Second, both the Division and the Financing for Development Office agree that the latter's work scope has become wider, namely by combining taxation matters and questions of financing for development, and that additional resources may be needed.

[9] Expert Group Meeting/Capacity Development Workshop on "Auditing for Social Change", Sixth Global Forum on Reinventing Government: Towards Participatory and Transparent Governance, 26 and 27 May 2007, Seoul (ST/ESA/PAD/SSER.E/75).

15. OIOS considers this recommendation implemented. OIOS suggests that the Department of Economic and Social Affairs more clearly define the work scope of the Financing for Development Office in the field of public financial management in order to avoid duplication between the Division and the Office, as well as to strengthen their cooperation on public finance matters. It also suggests that the Department of Economic and Social Affairs consider financial resources when further clarifying the work scope.

Recommendation 4
Enhancing the repertoire of best practices

Given the importance attached by the Committee of Experts on Public Administration to best practices, the Division should develop standard methodologies for identifying and compiling best practices in public administration.

16. The Division has been developing its initiatives to collect, evaluate and disseminate best practices in the various fields of its work. One major initiative was the ad hoc expert group meeting it sponsored on methodologies for the transfer of best practices in governance and public administration in June 2005 in Tunis. At this meeting, experts from 20 countries discussed the approaches and methodologies that are appropriate to knowledge transfer surrounding innovations in governance and public administration. In 2006, an expert from the Kennedy School of Government of Harvard University conducted a two-day training workshop for all Professional staff in the Division on how to write case studies for public policy/public administration.

17. One notable example of the Division's work in compiling best practices is the United Nations Public Service Awards. Annually organized by the Division, celebrated at United Nations Headquarters on 23 June and designated by the General Assembly in its resolution 57/277 as United Nations Public Service Day, the Awards programme solicits nominations from public-sector actors for innovative reforms and best practices in public administration worldwide. With the Awards, the Division promotes the role, professionalism and visibility of public service. The Division has developed a set of tools for managing the Awards: (a) a new, more user-friendly website on the United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance (UNPAN); (b) a new database facilitating online applications; (c) a newsletter dedicated to the Awards, published shortly after the event; (d) a follow-up questionnaire for past winners' experiences; and (e) a new brochure to promote the Awards.

18. In addition, the Division compiles best practices in particular fields of public administration. The Knowledge Management Branch in 2005/06 published two versions of the Compendium of Innovative E-government Practices (see ST/ESA/PAD/SER.E/96), presenting cases of innovative e-government solutions, services and products from all geographical regions of the world in order to promote knowledge sharing. Furthermore, the Socio-Economic Governance and Management Branch collects case studies on innovation in the Mediterranean region (the Programme for Innovation in Public Administration in the Euro-Mediterranean Region (InnovMed)) in order to promote the dissemination and transfer of innovations in public administration in the 16 countries of the Euro-Mediterranean

area.[10] UNPAN also plays a crucial role in collecting and disseminating best practices (see paras. 26-28 below).

19. The Division's work on best practices fulfils the recommendations of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration at its fifth session,[11] by which it advised the secretariat to facilitate innovations in governance for Member States by: (a) maximizing the use of UNPAN; (b) conducting research on innovations in governance; (c) preparing case studies; (d) documenting and disseminating knowledge on innovations; and (e) providing leadership capacity-building programmes on innovations. The General Assembly, in its resolution 59/55, stressed the importance of the United Nations Public Service Day and the United Nations Public Service Awards and requested the Secretary-General to continue to facilitate, through UNPAN, the dissemination of valuable practices in public administration.

20. OIOS considers this recommendation fully implemented.

Recommendation 5
Developing an information strategy

The Division should develop an information strategy to publicize more effectively its initiatives on public administration. The primary target of this strategy should be national policymakers. Part of the strategy should be to develop a worldwide database of national policymakers who would be interested in the Division's outputs. The strategy should also identify potential users in such groups as international organizations.

21. The Division has established an internal information strategy that more effectively frames its efforts in publicizing its public administration activities. Developed by the Division during its 2003 and 2005 retreats, the strategy contains detailed provisions regarding staff responsibilities and activities for entering information into UNPAN and the Intranet on all divisional activities, including conferences, advisory services and publications (see also recommendation 7).

22. The Division has continued to identify and update national focal points, mainly in ministries, for its public administration initiatives. Monthly news alerts are sent to registered UNPAN users, comprising Member States and the general public. In recent years, the number of contacts on the distribution list increased from 3,500 registered users in 2004 to 4,432 users currently.

23. The Division also publicizes its work to external partners through UNPAN, including newsletters on public administration. In addition to the continuous information provided on UNPAN, new publications of the Division are launched during important events. The *World Public Sector Report 2005* (ST/ESA/PAD/SER.E/63), for example, was presented during the Sixth Global Forum on Reinventing Government, held in Seoul in May 2005.

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[10] *Innovations in Governance and Public Administration: Replicating What Works* (ESA/PAD/SER.E/72); and "Innovations in Governance in the Mediterranean Region: Making Governments Work better in North Africa, the Middle East, and Western Balkans" (see http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/un/unpan024894.pdf).

[11] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2006, Supplement No. 24* (E/2006/44), chap. III, para. 16.

24. OIOS considers this recommendation implemented.

Recommendation 6
Enhancing the United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance

(a) The Division and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific should take effective steps in establishing working-level contacts to serve as a focal point to input information related to public administration in the UNPAN system;

(b) UNPAN demand-driven content should be further developed, particularly in relation to best practices;

(c) Information management, including inputting data in the UNPAN database and regularly using the resources offered by UNPAN, should be better integrated in the work of all branches of the Division, at all levels.

Working contacts with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

25. The Division has made concerted efforts to establish working-level contacts at the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), and has identified the Commission's Poverty and Development Division as a focal point for UNPAN. A representative of ESCAP participated in the Sixth Interregional Consultative Meeting of UNPAN in Shanghai, China, in 2005 and two focal points of ESCAP were trained by the Division on the use of the UNPAN management system via teleconferencing. Although ESCAP has only posted one document on UNPAN, its partners [12] contribute to it regularly. Discussions on the further involvement of ESCAP in UNPAN underscore that public administration, which is the UNPAN focus, is not an explicit part of the ESCAP work programme. Although a stronger relationship between the Division and ESCAP regarding public administration matters and UNPAN would be desirable,[13] cooperation between the Division and ESCAP on UNPAN will remain limited as long as public administration is not part of the ESCAP work programme.

Demand-driven content on the United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance

26. The Division has taken several steps in the past three years to make UNPAN more demand-driven. First, since it was launched in 2001, UNPAN has been evaluated by its users. User questionnaires are generally filled out monthly and the relevant branch of the Division analyses all responses on a semi-annual basis. Evaluation forms are available on the web portal to evaluate all major categories of divisional outputs, such as publications, expert groups meetings, training workshops

[12] These include CITYNET, a network of local authorities in Asia and the Pacific, and the Network of Local Government Training and Research Institutes (LOGOTRI).

[13] According to the most recent UNPAN user survey covering the period from January to December 2006, 30 per cent of UNPAN users mention Asia and the Pacific as the region of highest interest, followed by Africa (17 per cent, Latin America and the Caribbean (14 per cent), and Europe (13 per cent).

and technical projects. Through monthly progress monitoring reports and help desk services addressed to both the Division itself and UNPAN members, the Division keeps working on improving and changing UNPAN.

27. The Division provides online and offline desk services to UNPAN users on all requests. Generally, the Knowledge Management Branch, in charge of managing UNPAN, replies to all queries within 24 hours. In addition, the Division has made available several training manuals and tools, all facilitating the direct participation of members to upload their information on UNPAN.

28. With regard to best practices, the research database on UNPAN allows search by content type and has categorized "best practices" as one such content type. However, not all relevant information on best practices can be found easily by the user. Many resources are still not included in the directory of the database and can therefore not be found through the research function on the website. Other documents are only posted on specific websites, such as the website on the United Nations Public Service Awards, and are not linked to the research function of UNPAN, therefore making it difficult for users to find.

Information management

29. An internal strategy for information management was developed by the Division during its 2003 and 2005 retreats, and a Division task force in 2005 for the topic included representatives of all branches. The strategy contains general provisions, including a request that all staff enter contact data of the experts of their respective areas into the UNPAN experts directory, and that all inputs are monitored and reported to the Director/Branch Chief on a regular basis. It further identifies specific tasks and responsible parties for information sharing.

30. In addition to the web portal, an Intranet serves as an internal Division-wide information management tool. According to the strategy for information management, all staff members should be able to post publications and contacts on the Intranet, which is also accessible from home. Overall, the Intranet represents an important step forward within the Division towards more institutionalized information sharing. On the other hand, it is not yet used as extensively as it could be by all Division staff. The monthly progress reports on the implementation of UNPAN show, for example, that document management and uploads remain largely concentrated within just one branch.

31. While Division staff, Committee of Expert members and users believe that UNPAN is among the most useful provider of resources on public administration worldwide today, there are several criticisms on the general presentation and functioning of UNPAN. The user surveys carried out by the Division annually since 2002 show that the organization and layout are considered less efficient: while in 2002 81 per cent of the users rated the organization/layout as "good" or "excellent", the 2006 survey shows that only 11 per cent rated it as highly.[14] Furthermore, one third of survey respondents suggested that UNPAN concentrate on fewer critical topics on the web portal and another third proposed that it become more strategic. Therefore, it might be useful to further enhance UNPAN layout and presentation

[14] Results of two UNPAN Online users' surveys, one from 1 January to 31 December 2006 and the other 28 May to 14 November 2002.

aspects, such as the use of summaries and graphics, in order to strengthen information management.

32. OIOS considers this recommendation implemented. However, OIOS encourages further use of UNPAN and the Division Intranet by all three branches.

Recommendation 7
Enhancing linkages and synergies between functions and across themes

To increase synergies between the functions and across the various themes handled by the Division, management should take the following steps: (a) make cross-linkages between functions and themes a programming priority; (b) formulate products and outputs that would draw from the Division different functions; and (c) organize teams with the proper mix of skills to support these cross-dimensional products.

33. The Division has taken various steps to increase synergies between its branches. A retreat focusing mainly on this topic was organized on 28 April 2005. At the retreat, concrete recommendations to enhance inter-branch linkages were formulated. These included: (a) establishing criteria to identify divisional products and services; (b) addressing administrative and financial implications for inter-branch and interdivisional collaboration; (c) improving information sharing within the Division; and (d) establishing a system of greater coordination between chiefs of branches through regular consultations.

Making cross linkages between functions and themes a programming priority

34. Since January 2006, the Division has been operating on the basis of nine thematic clusters. Furthermore, all three branches assign a staff member to cross-cutting thematic discussion networks. Division staff report having inter-branch task forces to carry out activities in the priority areas of the Division. The task force on the evaluation of nomination for the United Nations Public Service Awards, for example, comprises representatives of all branches and the Office of the Director.

35. Senior representatives, mainly branch chiefs and the Director, regularly meet as a divisional management team. While primarily discussing current activities, these meetings also serve to review the implementation of the divisional work programme and identify thematic and functional linkages between responsible units.

Formulating products and outputs that would draw from the Division different functions

Organizing teams with the proper mix of skills to support these cross-dimensional products

36. One recommendation of the divisional retreat in April 2005 was to establish criteria to identify Division-wide products and services. The Division's main activities can be categorized as: (a) providing substantive support to intergovernmental dialogue, i.e., normative activities; (b) developing concepts, methodologies, guidelines and production of analytical research and publications, i.e., analytical activities; and (c) providing technical cooperation activities, including advocacy and promotion of innovation in public administration.

37. The Division is also currently producing outputs and providing services that are based on cross-cutting divisional functions and that require cross-branch skills. For example, the *World Public Sector Report*, an analytical tool on major trends in

public administration worldwide produced by the Division biennially, garners contributions from all branches and focuses on cross-cutting themes. In 2005, this report focused on human resources management, and the publication in 2007 will concentrate on participatory governance and partnerships. Another flagship output requiring cooperation across the branches are the United Nations Public Service Awards. Although these are mainly administered by the Governance and Public Administration Branch, logistical and analytical issues are dealt with by all branches. Similarly, most conferences, such as the International Conference on Engaging Communities, held in Brisbane, Australia, in August 2005, or the Sixth Global Forum on Reinventing Government, held in Seoul in May 2005, are jointly organized by the branches.

38. OIOS considers this recommendation implemented, but recommends the Division continue to take initiatives to strengthen inter-branch linkages.

Recommendation 8
Strengthening collaboration among United Nations entities

The annual inter-agency meetings on public administration, finance and development should be made a more effective mechanism of collaboration among United Nations entities involved in the area of public administration by, inter alia, encouraging greater information-sharing and exploring additional areas of cooperation, based on the individual entities' mandates and expertise.

39. The Division has strengthened its collaboration with other United Nations entities in various ways. First, for greater substantive coordination within the United Nations system, the Division has involved additional agencies, such as UNDP, the United Nations Children's Fund, and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) in the Institutional Partners Group; the Division was in charge of capacity-building during the biennial Global Forum on Reinventing Government.[15] During the Sixth Global Forum on Reinventing Government, the Group facilitated all the capacity development workshops under the leadership of the Division. With additional partners such as the United Nations Democracy Fund, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the World Bank, the Division is currently preparing more than 20 special meetings, sessions and workshops for the Seventh Global Forum on Reinventing Government scheduled to be held in Vienna in June 2007.

40. Also, in its role as chair of the Governance and Institution-Building Cluster of the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs, the Division regularly convenes coordination meetings to streamline the activities of task force members as well as to avoid duplication. In this context, the Division carried out a constructive exercise in the context of the preparation of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007: as coordinator of the Cluster, the Division facilitated consultations with other members of the cluster concerning the coordination of activities to be included in the proposed programme budget.

[15] Additional members of the Institutional Partners Group were, among other, international institutions and organizations such as Transparency International, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the World Bank Group, the Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation of the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, etc. as well as several institutions from the Republic of Korea, such as the Ministry of Government Administration and Home Affairs, the Board of Audit and Inspection and the Korea Institute of Public Administration.

41. The Division has also become involved on a regular basis in several other inter-agency mechanisms, such as the Framework Team on Coordination for Prevention and the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. In January 2006, the meeting of the International Group for Anti-Corruption Coordination was hosted jointly by the Division and UNDP. Several additional examples of specific cooperation between the Division and other United Nations entities have been noted, for example, with UNDP country offices in the context of the Global Forum on Reinventing Government. Further, the Division was strongly engaged in setting up the Ethics Office within the Department of Management.[16] In 2006, for example, one staff member of the Division was seconded to the Ethics Office for almost 10 months. There are also examples of collaboration between the Division and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, such as the preparation of a recent mission of the Department to Haiti.

42. OIOS considers this recommendation implemented.

III. Conclusion

43. In the past three years, the Division has taken steps to implement the OIOS recommendations. The flagship products and services of the Division, such as UNPAN, the United Nations Public Service Awards, the *World Public Sector Report* and the Global Forum on Reinventing Government, have all been strengthened. The Division has fostered partnerships with other United Nations entities as well as with numerous external organizations and research institutions worldwide. The rationalization of its scope and focus has also allowed the Division to tackle new and emerging issues in public administration. The Division has initiated cross-functional and cross-thematic cooperation between its branches in order to reduce duplications and to strengthen the comparative advantages and synergies of the Division. Important steps have also been taken for anchoring a methodology for identifying best practices. With the enhancement of UNPAN, the web portal managed by the Division, the Division has become an important Internet source for information on public administration worldwide, as many reference materials of the Division and its partners are regularly uploaded and are available free of charge.

44. Public finance management matters are addressed under new perspectives that are closely linked to public administration and citizen participation. This has opened new working fields and opportunities of collaboration with civil society, as well as with specific public institutions. However, consideration should be given to the allocation of adequate resources to the Financing for Development Office, whose work scope has been widened to include the provision of advisory services on operational activities in the field of both international and national tax administration (see paras. 9-11).

(*Signed*) Inga-Britt **Ahlenius**
Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services

26 March 2007

[16] The Office was later transferred to the Executive Office of the Secretary-General.